Import of Electronic Components

969. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the electronic component manufacturers have represented to Government that the new duty structure has resulted in the imported components being cheaper than local manufacturers;

(b) whether the import bill for component is likely to shoot up as a result thereof; and

(c) if so, what measures Government are taking to protect the domestic manufacturers of electronic components?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIV RAJ V. PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The import bill for electronic components is likely to increase only on a pro-rata basis as the consumption of electronic components increases with the demand.

(c) In order to make the manufacture of electronic component more competitive in the country, efforts are being made to make available at the earliest imported raw materials and capital goods to this industry at near international prices.

Electronics Policy

970. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent electronics policy has made free import of technology viable; and

(b) fi so, by when it is likely to affect the indigenous research and development in the field of electronics?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL). (a) The Electronics policy recently announced for import of technology in a pragmatic and appropriate manner.

(b) It is not likely to affect indigenous research and development in the field of electronics.

Snakes in endangered Species List

971. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that snakes are an endangered species in the country;

(b) whether clandestine trade of snake skins has assumed alarming proportions; and

(c) if so, the steps Government are taking to protect them from extinction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN): (a) Of the many species of snakes, the pythons and the egg-eating snakes are endangered. However, all the snakes are in need of protection.

(b) No, Sir. However, some cases of clandestine trade in snakeskins do take place from time to time and action under the law is taken to deal with them.

(c) All the species of snakes are afforded full legal protection from hunting and trade or commerce under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. No trapping licences are being issued in any part of the country for the purpose of trade in snakes or snakeskins.

Indo-French Joint Space

972. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Indo-French joint research pact on space has recently been signed; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND